



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, July 19, 2010

For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 514-6933

http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc/Press_Releases/index.html

Fort Washington Man Sentenced in Fatal Crash Two Died, One Seriously Hurt in May 2009

WASHINGTON - Darly Wilson, 41, of Fort Washington, Md., was sentenced today to a total of 27 years in prison by Judge Michael L. Rankin after pleading guilty in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia to one count of Voluntary Manslaughter, one count of Involuntary Manslaughter and one count of Assault with Serious Bodily Injury. The charges stemmed from a motor vehicle crash in May 2009 that killed two people and seriously injured another.

On Sunday, May 10, 2009, at about 1 a.m., a Prince George's County Police Officer was traveling in his privately owned vehicle when he observed a blue minivan appear to strike some cars in the parking lot of a small strip mall on Dallas Drive. It was later determined that the minivan, driven by Wilson, actually had jumped the curb and driven through a plate glass window and into a dry cleaners which was closed.

Defendant Wilson sped away, nearly striking the officer's car. The officer followed him to the intersection of Dallas and St. Barnabas Roads. As the officer tried to pull next to him, Wilson shot out into traffic and took off onto St. Barnabas, driving on the median and then crossing over into the oncoming lanes. Several cars had to swerve to avoid the minivan. Wilson then ran a red light and headed into the District. A marked Prince George's County police car captured the scene at that point on its dashboard camera. The marked unit, with lights and siren operating, could not catch Wilson, traveling in excess of 70 miles per hour.

The defendant sped south on Southern Avenue toward Chesapeake Street. At that "T"-shaped intersection, the defendant was confronted with not only a red light but also a southbound car that was stopped at the signal. Without slowing down, Wilson pulled into the oncoming lane across the double yellow line in an attempt to run the red light.

On Chesapeake Street, Darrell Miller, 23, was driving a 1999 Ford Escort. In the car were his friends, Linda Bowers and David Pride, both 22. The Escort approached the intersection and slowed to a stop for the red light. As the light changed to green, the Escort executed a left turn onto Southern Avenue just as Wilson made the decision to run the red light by entering the oncoming traffic lane. The results were catastrophic.

The impact with the defendant's Ford Windstar minivan pushed the Escort back in the direction from which it came in spite of its own momentum. The Escort was pushed onto the sidewalk, which caused it to spin like a top. It continued to spin southward until it struck a utility pole, and came to a stop 67 feet from the point of impact. Wilson's minivan continued on another 100 feet after striking the Escort.

There were no markings on the roadway that indicated braking by the defendant. Accident reconstruction indicates that Wilson's minimum speed was 79 miles per hour.

All three occupants of the Escort had to be cut from the vehicle. Darrell Miller was transported to the United Medical Center and pronounced dead within an hour of the crash. David Pride was taken to the Washington Hospital Center, where he died on May 18, 2009. Linda Bowers was taken to Prince George's Hospital Center. She suffered serious injuries and remained hospitalized until May 23, 2009.

Wilson exceeded the legal threshold for intoxication at the time of the crash. A blood test at the hospital revealed his Blood-Alcohol Content to be 0.11, over the legal limit of 0.08. Also, at the time of the crash, the defendant was operating on a suspended license.

In announcing today's sentencing, United States Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. praised the investigative efforts of Lead Detective Sheryl Harley and Detective Michael Miller of the Major Crash Investigation Unit, Sergeants Seth Anderson and Michael Bowman and Officers Jason Romlein and William Bogner of the Seventh District, Tech. Robert McCollum of the Forensic Services Division, Marcy Rinker of the Victim/Witness Assistance Unit of the U.S. Attorney's Office, Paralegal specialist Sandra Lane, and Assistant United States Attorney John J. Soroka of the Homicide Section, who prosecuted the case.

###